



AFRICAN UNION HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT AND PLEDGING CONFERENCE
23-27 May 2022
Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

**Theme: “*Humanitarian Financing: Addressing the Current
Humanitarian Challenges in Africa*”**

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

1.0. Background

1. The General Assembly adopted the Executive Council **Decision EX.CI/Dec.1109 (XXXVII)**, during the 38th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, 3-4 February 2021 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which : “... *welcomed the offer made by the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to organize a continental humanitarian summit and donor’s/pledging conference in Equatorial Guinea with the view to preventing forced displacement and searching for solutions and called on the Commission to extend the necessary support taking into account health protocol issued by Africa CDC.*”
2. In this regard, the African Union will convene a Humanitarian Summit and a Pledging Conference, on 25 - 27 May 2022 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. The Summit is at the invitation of H.E. President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, in his capacity as Champion of the 2019 AU theme, “*Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa*” and H.E. Macky Sall President of the Republic of Senegal, as the new Chair of the Union.
3. The 2022 Humanitarian Summit and the Pledging Conference will deliberate efforts set forth by African leaders to address the current humanitarian challenges that Africa is facing, exacerbated by the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and disasters across the Continent, identify durable and sustainable solutions to address the current issues including those that contribute to post-conflict recovery and peace and development nexus.
4. This concept provides the framework of the Humanitarian Summit and Pledging conference. It highlights thematic areas to be addressed during the summit and sets out the objectives of the Pledging Conference which aims to mobilize continental and international support and resources for humanitarian response in Africa. The background papers provide a detailed description of issues under each thematic area. A separate note detailing the format of the pledging conference is also attached.

1.1. Humanitarian Context in Africa

5. Today, the African continent continues to face some of the most complex humanitarian emergencies which are in some cases the result of natural and human induced disasters but in very many others, are driven by conflicts leading to mass displacements of persons both within and across national borders. These have exponentially increased humanitarian needs over the years, with the most vulnerable communities who are already facing multiple shocks being more affected.
6. Humanitarian needs are growing fast in Africa, this is driven by increasing climatic shocks, conflicts, impact of Covid-19 and economic slowdowns More than 114 million people in 15 most affected African countries require urgent assistance in

2022¹. The number of people in need has significantly increased in Africa due to increased climate change related disasters and COVID-19. At the same time, it is important to note that humanitarian response plans have been severely underfunded to cope with the modern-day challenges during the past three years in Africa and the funding gap remains large.

7. Africa has more than 30 million internally displaced persons (IDPS), refugees and asylum seekers. In 2020, Sub-Saharan Africa had a total of 10.4 million internally displaced children aged below 15 years². Protracted conflicts and intercommunal conflicts in some parts of Africa continue to contribute to increased displacements, food insecurity, and limited access to basic social services. Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, and Mozambique fuelled some of the world's fastest growing displacement crises in 2021. Most countries facing conflicts are also experiencing other forms of shocks particularly related to climate and economic shocks.
8. The number of people displaced due to climatic conditions is increasing with approximately 4.3 million newly displaced due to disasters mostly related to climate change³. The Southern region face multiple climatic shocks characterised by cyclones, floods, and sporadic rainfall patterns in some countries. In 2021, Madagascar faced a severe humanitarian crisis with famine conditions prevailing in the Southern regions. This drought has left an estimated 1.3 million people severely food insecure — more than double the number in the same period of 2020⁴, and the number of children hospitalizations due to severe acute malnutrition in the Grand Sud in the first quarter of the year was four times more than the five-year average.⁵ In East Africa, humanitarian needs are on the rise, more than 25 million people are facing high levels of food insecurity. These needs are driven by impact of climate change disasters, conflict and economic impact of Covid-19. In the Horn of Africa region, nearly 20 million people are projected to be in need of humanitarian assistance in 2022 in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia following severe drought due to consecutive failed and below average rainfall seasons⁶.
9. In the Western and Central regions, Humanitarian crises of concern include Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, and Mali. The protracted conflicts, high poverty rates and macroeconomic conditions have led to increased needs, including high rates of food insecurity and malnutrition. More than 58 million people in the Western and Central regions are facing severe food insecurity, the highest number recorded since 2016⁷. In the Sahel region, the Lake Chad basin region and the Great Lakes region, complex and fast-growing crises are causing unprecedented needs. Armed violence, terrorism and insecurity have forced more people than ever before to flee their homes, destroying the social fabric of communities and disrupting basic social services. Across these regions, the

¹ OCHA, [Global Humanitarian Overview 2022](#)

² International Displacement Monitoring centre: [Internal Displacement in Changing Climate](#) p16

³ International Displacement Monitoring centre: [Internal Displacement in Changing Climate](#) p16

⁴ UNOCHA Humanitarian overview

⁵ UNOCHA Humanitarian overview

⁶ FEWSNET, <https://fews.net/east-africa/alert/december-29-2021>

⁷ OCHA, [Global Humanitarian Overview 2022](#), p. 182.

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Global%20Humanitarian%20Overview%202022.pdf>

numbers of IDPs and refugees have risen exponentially with over two million people internally displaced in the Central Sahel region, which represents a 30 percent increase since 2020 with Burkina Faso accounting for over 50 percent of total displaced in the region. In the Lake Chad basin, over five million are displaced of which over 70 percent are in Nigeria.

10. North Africa remains at the centre of complex mixed migration flows. In Libya, civilians continue to disproportionately suffer the consequences of the complex conflict for which definitive sustainable political resolution (solution?) remains elusive. Additionally, in Sudan, humanitarian crises are driven by economic crises, poverty and conflict which has led to increased displacements and climatic shocks such as floods. Approximately 14.3 million need some sort of humanitarian assistance, majority of whom are women and children
11. Food and nutrition crisis remains of concern. Key drivers of food insecurity include climatic shocks, conflict and insecurity, deteriorating macro-economic conditions, and impact of COVID-19. The number of people facing a critical lack of food has more than tripled. Nearly 282 million people are undernourished in Africa which represents an increase of 49 million from 2019⁸. Sub-Sahara Africa is mostly affected, with 24.1 % of the population being undernourished, while North Africa has 7.1% undernourished. Malnutrition remains a challenge as Africa has some of the highest cases of malnutrition globally accounting for more than nine out of ten of all children are stunted, more than nine out of ten children with wasting, and more than seven out of ten children who are overweight worldwide⁹. A significant number of countries facing major food insecurity crisis are in Africa include South Sudan, (Sudan?) Southern Madagascar, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Somalia. Further, the cost of food basket has increased, and this has reduced purchasing power and limited access to food, especially among the poor households. In Sudan for instance, the cost is six times higher while in Sudan it is three times higher¹⁰. Food and insecurity needs are projected to increase amidst reduced funding in this sector - the Global Humanitarian food security sector is only 34 per cent funded and the nutrition sector less than 35 per cent funded.
12. The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the humanitarian crises in Africa. Since the pandemic began, African countries have put measures to control the pandemic in an effort to safeguard the gains made in the health sectors. Health system has been subjected to unprecedented pressure in addition to countries grappling with multi-layered disasters and communicable diseases such as Ebola Virus Disease outbreaks, haemorrhagic fevers, cholera outbreaks, and malaria. Other essential services such as immunization and reproductive health have also been affected. The Africa continent has put in efforts to minimize the impact of COVID-19 and ensure equitable distribution of vaccines across the continent. This comes at a time when vaccination campaigns are being revamped across the continent. To curb the widespread of COVID in Africa and to mitigate it, there is need for greater financing for vaccines,

⁸ FAO, State of Food Insecurity, (SOFI) 2021. Transforming food systems for food security, improved nutrition and affordable healthy diets for all.

⁹ FSIN, Global State of Food and Nutrition security Report, September 2021 update.

¹⁰ OCHA, Global Humanitarian Overview 2022.

diagnostics, and maximization of the supply chain to ensure vaccines reach everyone including refugees, IDPs and other marginalized communities.

13. The AU has instituted policies, strategies and statutes to protect the rights of IDPs and refugees to ensure they benefit from all-inclusive assistance. Refugee operations have faced funding shortfalls over time leading to de-prioritization of some assistance and rationed assistance to stretch the available resources. In the last five years, Regional Refugee Response Plans for African refugee crises were less than 50 percent funded. While a lot of efforts have been directed towards promoting self-reliance of refugees, limited funding combined with prevailing factors such as conflict, disasters, supply chain disruptions, rising food prices and loss of income due to COVID19 have further inhibited refugees from attaining self-reliance. Urban refugees who were previously working towards self-reliance have particularly been impacted by COVID-19 with a majority losing their livelihood
14. Under the AU Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) Policy, adopted in 2006, Humanitarian/Emergency assistance is a set of integrated and coordinated measures that seek to save and sustain lives, maintain basic human dignity, ensure the protection of civilians, support the return and reintegration of displaced populations and help resuscitate socio-economic activity.
15. The main focus of PCRD is essentially through designing and implementing community-based quick impact projects within the camps of refugees and IDPs, as well as the reintegrated persons within hosting countries, in order to facilitate quick recovery and reconciliation, harness the productive capacity and skills of populations, help the creation of social safety nets, enhance food security and resuscitate livelihood systems and coping mechanisms of affected communities.
16. In the quest for durable solutions, there is necessity to provide training and skills development to refugees and IDPs, in order to facilitate the reintegration of affected populations such as unemployed youth, women, ex-combatants, refugees, IDPs (even while still in exile/displacement) and persons with disability, according to the African Union Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy, adopted by the AU Heads of State and Government in 2006.
17. The African continent continues to host increasing numbers of refugees, IDPs and others affected by conflict, persecution and violence, within a humanitarian landscape characterized by new and emergent threats leading to other waves of refugees and IDPs. The focus should be given to deal with these emergent situations to avoid their prolongation, given that the resolution of the issues related to notably the reintegration or the return of the refugees and IDPs becomes more complicated with prolonged situations.
18. Human rights violations, including gender-based violence and violence against children, are also increasing. There are increased protection concerns across the continent amidst the increased humanitarian crises. Due to COVID-19, school closures have led to increased dropouts and increased vulnerabilities and risks for young boys and girls. Conflicts in some parts of Africa have also led to school

closure. In the Sahel, the education system has gravely been affected by the crisis in the region with over 5,000 schools non-operational. This does not only affect the long-term human capital but also predisposes young girls to early marriages and other risks such as gender-based violence.

19. Militarized and politicized humanitarian response to these crises constitute a major risk to humanitarian action. Humanitarian actors continue to be increasingly exposed to health and security risks and are often targeted in attacks. According to the Kampala Convention (2009), the State parties shall respect and ensure respect for the humanitarian and civilian character of the protection of and assistance to IDPs, including in ensuring that such persons do not engage in subversive activities. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen the monitoring of camps of refugees and IDPs to maintain the civilian character of these camps as well as guaranteeing the good governance of the camps and the basic freedoms of refugees and IDPs. This will facilitate the task for the AU in deploying fact-finding missions and inquiry missions as well as financing quick impact projects and peace strengthening projects, in order to support the self-reliance of refugees and IDPs.
20. The AU has demonstrated its continental leadership in garnering the political will and commitment from Member States to develop and embrace viable measures at policy and practical levels. It has fundamentally put emphasis on progressive initiatives in addressing root causes and finding durable solutions through adequate preparations in the aftermath of humanitarian challenges on the continent. Equally, it is committed to shaping and guiding humanitarian action in the continent.
21. Despite the increasing complex and multifaceted humanitarian crises in the continent, funding remains a challenge with most humanitarian crisis being under-funded. It is in this vein that the Member States of the AU during the 38th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council held in Addis Ababa from 3-4 February 2022, have noted with great concern the devastating effect of the COVID-19 pandemic in Africa and its additional challenge to the humanitarian situation on the continent, and called for the convening of a Continental Humanitarian Summit (CHS) to address the challenge. The Summit will take place on 25-27 May 2022 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea.

2.0. Organization of the Humanitarian Summit and Pledging Conference

22. The three-day summit and pledging conference will focus on two areas – the humanitarian summit segment, and the pledging conference segment. The Humanitarian summit segment will have the participation of AU, partners, donors, civil society, ministers, Regional Economic Communities and Mechanisms, community representatives, the private sector and other stakeholders.
23. On the third day, a high-level Head of State and pledging conference will be held with the objective of garnering resources for the humanitarian basket fund. This will have the participation of Heads of States, Heads of UN Agencies, donors,

members of civil society, the private sector and international and local organisations.

2.1. Objectives of the Continental Humanitarian Summit and Pledging Conference

1. The Malabo Summit will aim to establish the AU's humanitarian agenda within the next decade, identify durable solutions for Africa in line with the AU humanitarian architecture outlined in the Common African Positions on Humanitarian effectiveness. This will also lead to discussions on the operationalization of the African Humanitarian Agency, and advocate for sustainable financing, and mobilize resources for humanitarian response in Africa.
2. The specific objectives of the Continental Humanitarian Summit are:
 - a) To validate and finalise the operationalization of the African Humanitarian Agency.
 - b) To discuss, reflect and draw lessons on humanitarian response in Africa and demonstrate the capacities, commitment, investments and actions taken by Member States to address the humanitarian crisis in Africa.
 - c) To discuss lessons identified in COVID-19 pandemic response and identify recommendations and strategies on improving health system in humanitarian settings.
 - d) To assess the situation of human rights within refugee and IDP camps in the continent, notably with regard to women rights, children welfare as well as other vulnerable categories.
 - e) To discuss durable solutions to growing impact of climate change disasters and climate change induced forced displacement in Africa.
 - f) To reflect and adopt measures to address the worsening food security and nutrition for persons of concern in camps and settlements.
 - g) To promote resource mobilization and financing for humanitarian action in Africa; and to strengthen existing partnerships and establish new ones for effective resource mobilization and humanitarian action in Africa.
 - h) Mobilize resources from AU Member States and the wider international community to respond to the unprecedented humanitarian emergency currently facing the continent and to support resilience programmes for populations affected by complex crises, famine, and other disasters.
 - i) To discuss the financing and implementation of post-Conflict reconstruction and development programmes and projects for refugees and IDPs in Africa; and
 - j) Advocate and promote special measures for the protection of women, vulnerable groups, especially children, youth, the elderly and persons with disabilities in humanitarian situations.

3.0. Summit Thematic Focus

3. The Humanitarian Summit will focus on the following thematic areas: -

- a) **Theme 1** – Climate change, disasters and forced displacement in Africa
- b) **Theme 2** – Addressing food security and nutrition challenges in the Humanitarian Space in Africa
- c) **Theme 3** – Health challenges in humanitarian space in Africa
- d) **Theme 4**- Post-conflict reconstruction development for refugees and IDPs in Africa
- e) **Theme 5** – Revitalizing resource mobilization and financing for humanitarian action in Africa

4.6. Expected Outcomes of the Humanitarian Summit and the Pledging Conference

- a) To increase visibility of Africa Union humanitarian actions and ensuring efficient, effective, and sustainable solutions to forced displacements.
- b) The Conference will reflect and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the current humanitarian funding policies and identify concrete steps towards efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. This will also take place in the context where the AU is placing emphasis on the full implementation of its humanitarian policies.
- c) Garner commitments, support, and partnerships for the operationalization of the African Humanitarian Agency as a vehicle that will strengthen the predictive, preventive, and responsive and resilience capabilities of AU Member States to enable them to play their primary role.
- d) Develop The Humanitarian Summit and the Pledging Conference is expected to yield meaningful commitments and resources that will be followed up at the national regional, continental, and international levels to make humanitarian action in Africa more timely, efficient, and responsive.
- e) Broaden the resource mobilization mechanisms and channels. The Pledging Conference will allow deeper discussions with traditional and non-traditional donors with the aim of diversifying scope of donors.
- f) A Declaration adopted by Member states with key recommendations.

4.8. Format

The event will be held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, with the venue to be identified and communicated at a later date. Side events will be held during the event. Details will be communicated later.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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